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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Hungary

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT Zahony Railroad Station

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1. The railroad station at Zahony (E90), on the Hungarian-Soviet (Ruthenian) border, has been greatly expanded since the end of hostilities. During the years 1946 and 1947 two large warehouses were built, as well as barracks, officers' billets, and a large number of shunting tracks (source says 48 for both Russian and standard gauge). In 1949 a workshop was constructed for the adjustment of the wheels of railroad cars from standard to Russian gauge and vice versa; a similar shop is being prepared in Kisvarda. Highways in the vicinity have also been improved.
2. The wheel-adjustment procedure is still in an experimental stage, and currently all shipments to and from the Soviet Union are unloaded at Zahony and reloaded. This is in spite of the fact that tracks of both gauges are available from Chop (Csap) to Kisvarda (Kec) on the main Lemberg-Budapest line, where the broad gauge has been provided by the laying of a third rail alongside the standard gauge track.* The lines from Zahony to Zmork (E90) and to Mataszalma (F05) have a single track of standard gauge.
3. About 150-200 carloads of freight are transferred daily from one gauge to the other. The work of loading and unloading is done by Hungarian laborers who have been hired locally, and by forced labor brought over the border from Chop under guard. The goods shipped from Hungary are chiefly foodstuffs and machinery (mainly agricultural machinery); the principle foodstuffs involved are grain, cattle, and wine. Materials coming from Russia are almost exclusively of a military nature, such as arms, munitions, and uniforms.
4. Troop transports are unloaded on a siding close to a transit camp which is surrounded by barbed wire and strictly guarded. Here soldiers going to Hungary are given new, clean uniforms; those returning to the Soviet Union, on the contrary, are supplied with worn-out uniforms and are forced to surrender bicycles, watches, and other loot. This process is described as "delousing".
5. Soviet troops stationed in Zahony consist of 300-400 MVD border troops, with 35-40 officers. Some of the officers have their families with them, and are billeted in requisitioned houses in the village. The commandant is Colonel Grigoriev (fnu); second in command is Captain Alexander Yurchin. Zahony also has a Hungarian garrison, the 14th Battalion of Border Chasseurs, numbering 600-700 men.

CLASSIFICATION

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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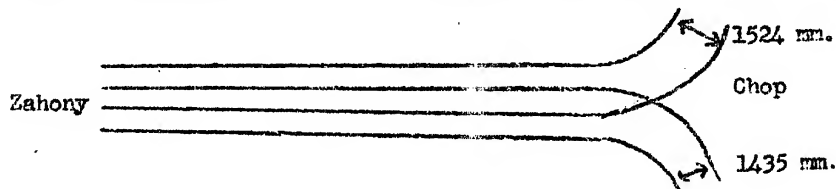
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6. The transfer station of Zahony is located about two kilometers from the Tisza River, which forms the boundary in this area. The two bridges over the river were blown up during the war, but were restored in 1947; they are of similar construction, with metal arches on five supports 50 meters apart. On the Hungarian side they have both Hungarian and Russian guards, but only Russian guards on the Soviet side.

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~~Comment:~~ a railroad engineer, says that on the railroad bridge between Zahony and Chop there are four rails, with the broad-gauge and standard-gauge tracks overlapping and with ties about 3-3.2 meters long. The arrangement of the tracks may be represented as follows:



This source adds that there is no turn-table for the Soviet gauge locomotives, but that there is a circular line of track.

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